白の皇国物語 第二十七回
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BLOW THE WHISTLE.
THIS WHISTLE EMITS A SOUND THAT CANNOT BE HEARD BY HUMANS AND MOST OF THOSE WITH MIXED BLOOD. THE ROYAL FAMILY KEEPS IT FOR THE SAKE OF BEING ABLE TO CONTACT THE ICE WOLVES.

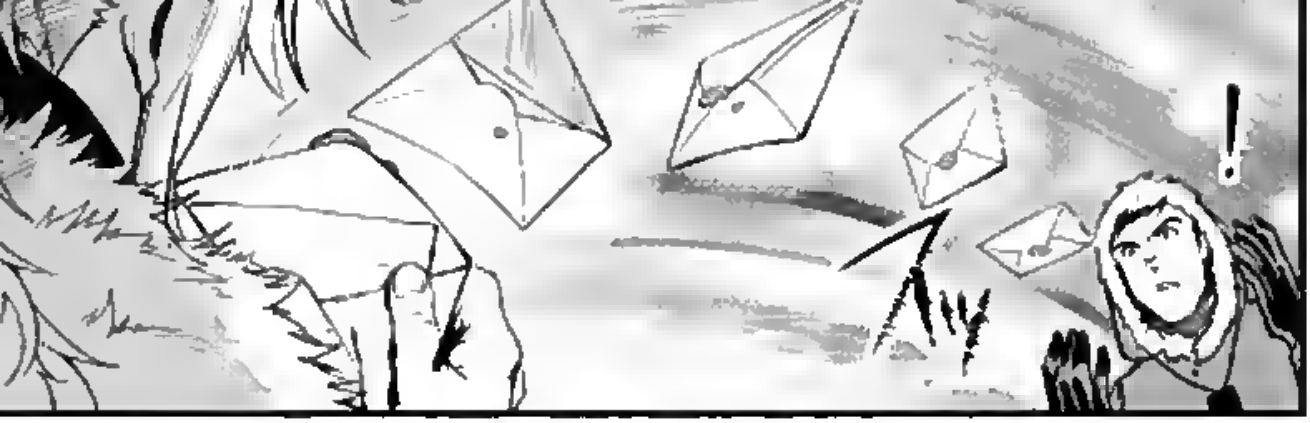
W-WE HAVE COME TO MEET CHIEF ALONZ.
WHAT AN INTIMIDAT-ING AURA...

I AM ALONZ, MESSENGER.

... HM.

I AM MAJOR HANSLEY BIDOWICK, OUR REGENT HAS SENT ME HERE AS AN ENVOY.

HE WISHED FOR US TO DELIVER THIS MESSAGE.


!

... OH?

"WE SHALL COMPENSATE YOU APPROPRIATELY AFTER THE CONFLICT IF YOU CHOOSE TO AGREE TO THESE CONDITIONS."
"IN THE CASE THAT YOU REFUSE,

"1. ALLOW THE ARMY TO PASS THROUGH THE WHITE WOLF MOUNTAINS."
"2. TELL US OF THE FASTEST ROUTE 20,000 SOLDIERS CAN TAKE."
"3. GUIDE THE ARMY."

YOU WILL STILL BE COMPENSATED APPRO-PRIATELY"...
WH- DON'T TELL ME...
"APPRO-PRIATELY", HUH?
TELL ME, ENVOY, IS YOUR REGENT TRYING TO THREATEN US?

AS LONG AS OUR MOUNTAINS ARE LEFT ALONE,
WE DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO THE KINGDOM.
HIS HIGHNESS SHOULDN'T BE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO ATTEMPT TO PICK A FIGHT WITH THE ICE WOLVES.
I DON'T KNOW THE FULL CONTENTS OF THE MESSAGE, BUT THIS SOUNDS LIKE A THREAT!
I SEE NO REASON FOR THE NORTHERN BARBARIANS TO INVADE OUR MOUNTAIN,
THEY WOULD NOT FIND ANYTHING OF VALUE TO THEM HERE.
CHIEF ALONZ,
THE ICE WOLVES MUST HAVE BEEN ISOLATED FOR SO LONG THAT THEY DON'T CONSIDER THE IDEA OF OTHERS SIMPLY WANTING TO KILL THEM.
I GET IT NOW...

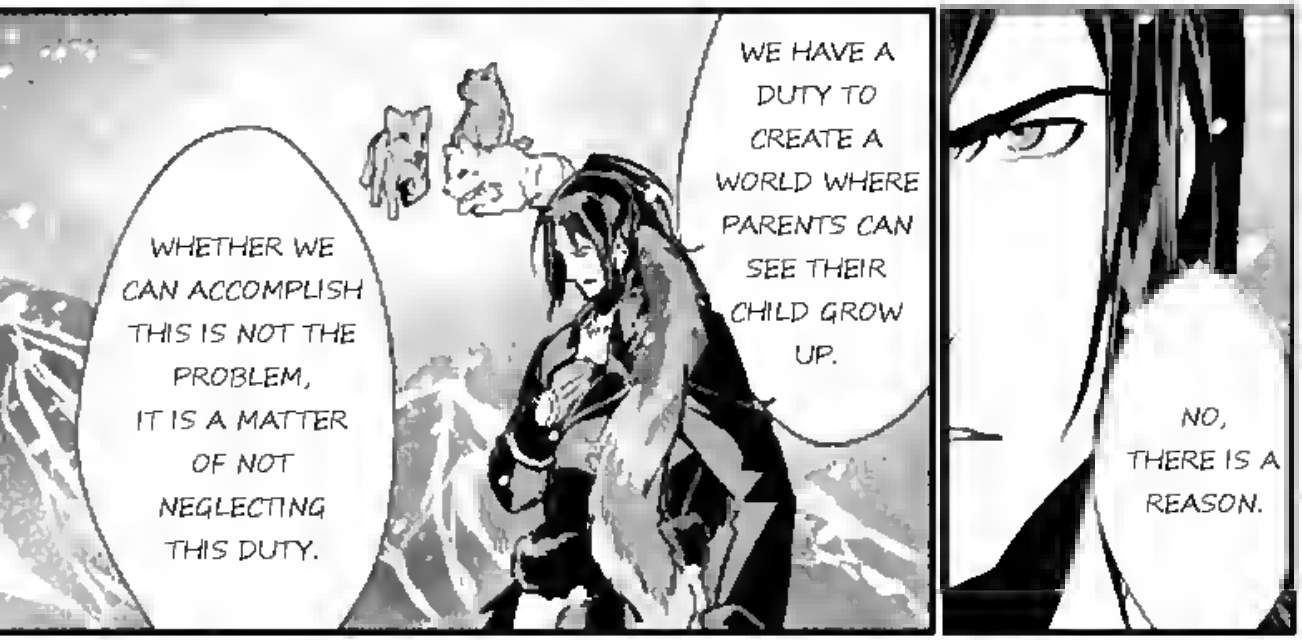
YOU ARE TAKING THE EMPIRE TOO LIGHTLY!
THEY MAY LOVE THEIR COUNTRY AS WE LOVE OURS,
IN THE EMPIRE, 国にとって
THIS IS A MATTER OF PROTECTING THE ICE WOLVES AS WELL!
BUT THEIR LOVE IS TWISTED AND ALLOWS THEM TO COMMIT ATROCITIES WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT!
A SINGLE ICE WOLF IS WORTH MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF MONEY TO THEM. 一体が ある 金に
AND THE FANGS AND BONES ARE VIEWED AS HIGH QUALITY MAGICAL MATERIALS.
AN ICE WOLF'S LIVER IS THOUGHT TO CURE ANY DISEASE, ITS PELT TO PROTECT FROM THE COLDEST WIND,
THIS こ PLAN IS 文 ALL WE HAVE! いつ ないのだ
CHIEF ALONZ!
LIKEWISE, IF WE LACK THE ICE WOLVES' SUPPORT, HOW WILL WE DEAL WITH THAT CANNON? を くして
全軍 帝国 ARE WE TO OPPOSE THEIR ARMY WITH CORPSES? て

CHIEF ALONZ!
... I WILL GRANT YOU PASSAGE, BUT NOTHING ELSE.
SENDING 20,000 SOLDIERS INTO THE MOUNTAINS WITHOUT A GUIDE IS A DEATH SENTENCE...
CHIEF ALONZ,
CH-
!
PLEASE WAIT!

... GURDOLDEN.
CHIEF, I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD RECONSIDER YOUR DECISION.
WE COULD BE WIPED OUT WITH THEM.
MY OWN PARENTS PERISHED IN THE LAST CONFLICT, I KNOW VERY WELL WHAT CRUELTY THE EMPIRE IS CAPABLE OF.
黒い小狼…
A BLACK ICE WOLF...

I KNOW VERY WELL OF YOUR PARENTS' DEATHS IN THE LAST WAR,
OUR CLAN RAISED YOU IN HONOR OF THEIR SACRIFICE.
HOWEVER, THE EMPIRE HAS NOT THREATENED OUR TERRITORY THIS TIME, SO WE HAVE NO REASON TO FIGHT THEM.

JUST WHO IS THIS GURDOLDEN FELLOW?
NOT ONLY IS HE BLACK LIKE THEM, BUT HIS PARENTS' DEATHS WERE IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO BE HONORED,
ICE WOLVES ARE THOUGHT TO BE THE DESCENDANTS OF THE MAGIC WOLVES FROM BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.


WE HAVE A DUTY TO CREATE A WORLD WHERE PARENTS CAN SEE THEIR CHILD GROW UP.
WHETHER WE CAN ACCOMPLISH THIS IS NOT THE PROBLEM, IT IS A MATTER OF NOT NEGLECTING THIS DUTY.
NO, THERE IS A REASON.

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE HUMANS WHO KILLED MY PARENTS AND TOOK THEIR BODIES, I DISGUISED MYSELF AS A HUMAN AND SLIPPED INTO WILMAGS.
WHAT I LEARNED THERE WAS THAT THEY TOO HAVE FAMILIES
AND WILL FIGHT WHEN NECESSARY. THEY EVEN LOSE THEIR MINDS AT TIMES.
HMPH... I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST PLAYING AROUND, BUT YOU WERE STUDYING HUMANS.

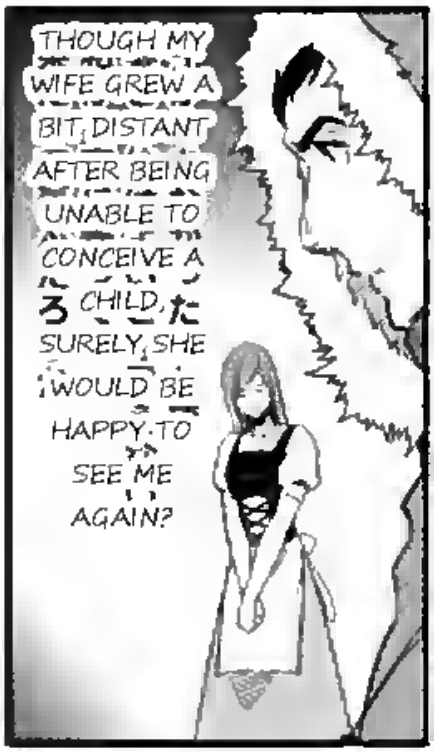
CHIEF,

IF YOU WILL NOT GRANT THEM THE CLAN'S ASSISTANCE,
THEN I WILL ASSIST THEM AS AN INDIVIDUAL.

SO BE IT,
.....
YOU WOULD DARE TO OPPOSE THE CLAN?
WHY WOULD YOU GO THAT FAR FOR US?
IT'S AS YOU JUST HEARD, HURRY AND RETURN FOR YOUR ARMY, MY OWN FAMILY IS ON THE LINE HERE TOO.
I WILL ENTRUST THIS TO YOU. SHOULD ANYTHING HAPPEN, WE WILL TAKE CARE OF YOUR WIFE AND CHILD.

IT ISN'T JUST FOR YOU,
THE EMPIRE WOULD TEAR APART MY WIFE AND CHILD FOR ALL THEY COULD HARVEST FROM THEM, COULD YOU STAND FOR THE SAME HAPPENING TO YOUR OWN WIFE AND CHILD?

... I HAVE A WIFE... BUT WE'VE YET TO HAVE A CHILD.
I SEE. BUT WOULD YOU STAND FOR THE EMPIRE KILLING YOUR WIFE AND DISSECTING HER FOR WHATEVER USE THEY CAN GET OUT OF HER?


THOUGH MY WIFE GREW A BIT DISTANT AFTER BEING UNABLE TO CONCEIVE A CHILD, SURELY SHE WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE ME AGAIN?

WE DO NOT HAVE ANY GRAVES FOR OUR DEAD, BUT WE DO KEEP THEIR FANGS AS A MEMENTO, YET I HAVE NOTHING BECAUSE THE EMPIRE TOOK MY PARENTS' BODIES.
I NEED YOUR REGENT TO WIN THIS WAR, AT THE VERY LEAST, I WILL BE FIGHTING FOR MY OWN FAMILY.

BUT, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT WOULD ERASE EVERYTHING BETWEEN US.
AND I THEN HAD TO LEAVE BECAUSE OF MY MILITARY DUTIES, PREVENTING ME FROM SUPPORTING HER.
NOT HAVING A CHILD WAS HARD ON HER,
LOOKING BACK, SHE CARED FOR ME MOST OF ALL.
ON THE DAY OF OUR WEDDING, I GOT A STOMACHACHE FROM THE STRESS BUT SHE WAITED FOR ME.
WHEN WE BEGAN DATING, THE HEEL OF HER SHOE BROKE AND I CARRIED HER BACK HOME...
PLEASE LEND US YOUR STRENGTH.
AS LONG AS WE WIN THIS BATTLE, I CAN ONE DAY RETURN TO HER.
I VALUE MY WIFE THE MOST IN THIS WORLD.

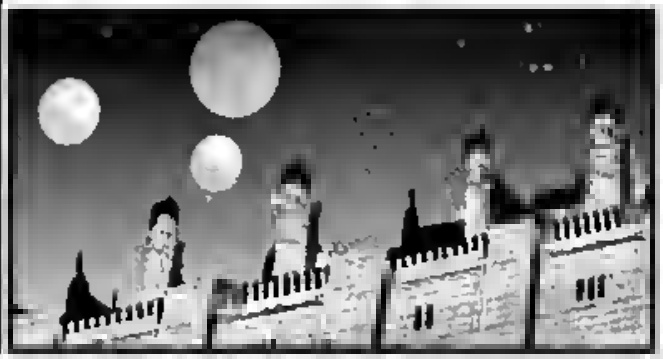
THUS THE ASSISTANCE OF THE ICE WOLVES WAS SECURED AND "OPERATION GURDOLDEN" WAS FINALIZED.
GLADLY.

AND SO THE CURTAINS ROSE ON THE BATTLE THAT WOULD DETERMINE THE KINGDOM'S FATE.
BECAUSE "GURDOLDEN" MEANS "PROTECTOR" IN THE ANCIENT TONGUE, EVERYONE WAS PLEASED WITH THE OPERATION'S NAME.

MEANWHILE, LECTIVAL MADE USE OF THE TIME FOR SLEEPING TO TRAIN WITH THE KING'S SWORD.

COMING UP WITH A COUNTER TO THAT WAS A DIFFICULT ORDEAL FOR THE YET INEXPERIENCED LECTIVAL.
GLORIE'S "GOD-SLAYING SWORD" MANIPULATES "NOTHING" TO "TEAR" APART EVERYTHING.
帝あ
BUT HIS OPPONENT IS THAT TIGER OF A PRINCESS.
THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE IN THE SWORDS' POWER OUTPUT.
な賭可こ
THEY WILL BOTH BE RISKING THEIR LIVES IN THE COMING BATTLE.

THE FIRST GROUP WILL MOVE OUT TOMORROW.



JEEZ...
WHAT WAS IT...

I'M QUITE HAPPY WITH JUST BEING INVITED TO GO ON A WALK,

... SO WHAT DID YOU NEED ME HERE FOR?

=3
BUT YOUR WAY OF INTERACTING WITH WOMEN NEEDS SOME WORK.
MMM...
I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND.
SAY, LECT...
I THINK THAT THIS SITUATION IS APT FOR GIVING

YOUR LOVER-- YOUR FIANCÉE A KISS.

MAYBE FOR NORMAL LOVERS, BUT WE'VE GOT A FIGHT WITH THAT PRINCESS AHEAD OF US.

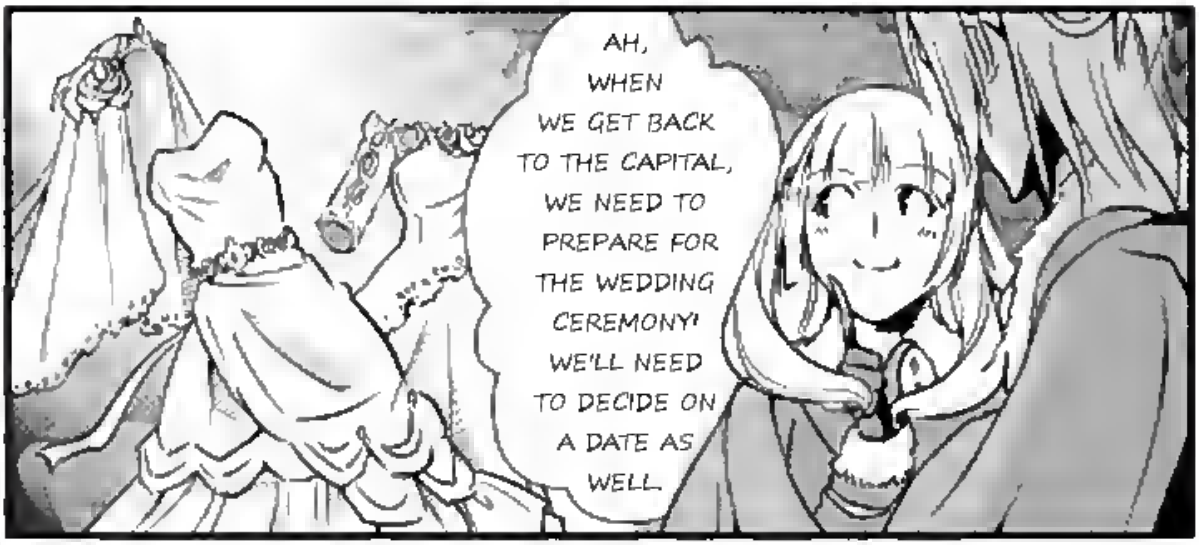
I THINK A BETTER LOCATION AND MOOD IS NEEDED FOR THAT...

BUT AS LONG AS ONE OF US IS ALIVE, WON'T THE OTHER ALSO BE ALIVE?
THIS COULD BE OUR LAST NIGHT TOGETHER, TRY ACTING LIKE A MAN FOR ONCE!
I INTEND TO PROTECT YOU...
OH YEAH. THAT'S RIGHT.
... THAT JUST MEANS THE OTHER OPTION IS BOTH OF US DYING.
BUT YOU'LL EVENTUALLY BE FORCED TO ABANDON ME.

A KING MIGHT ABANDON A RETAINER,
BUT A MAN
WOULDN'T ABANDON HIS BELOVED.
LECT...
PFF.
... PROB-ABLY.

IF SHE'S SO SCARY, SHALL I FIGHT HER INSTEAD?
TO BE HONEST, I WAS HOPING TO JUST NOT FIGHT HER TOMORROW, SHE'S SCARY AFTER ALL.
DOES NOT CALLING ME A FOOL MAKE IT THAT MUCH MORE POLITE?
YOU'RE REALLY QUITE A FO- SILLY.
HAHAHA
THERE'S ENOUGH RISKS AS IT IS, I'D PREFER NOT TAKING MORE.
I SEE... WELL... IN ANY CASE
IF YOU TELL ME TO BEAT HER, I JUST MIGHT BE ABLE TO.
YOU'RE A DRAGON AND SHE'S A DRAGON KILLER, YOU'RE POORLY SUITED.

I PRAY IT ISN'T NEEDED.
I'LL GO OUT IF I NEED TO.
HAHA.
AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.
I NEED YOU TO WIN HERE, I INTEND TO BECOME YOUR QUEEN LATER ON!
PRAYING IS LILICIA'S JOB, YOU SHOULD BE USING YOUR HEAD, YOUR BODY, AND THE SWORD!
GOOD.
I HAVE TO WIN FOR THIS PRINCESS.
I'LL WIN THIS BATTLE.


AH, WHEN WE GET BACK TO THE CAPITAL, WE NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE WEDDING CEREMONY! WE'LL NEED TO DECIDE ON A DATE AS WELL.

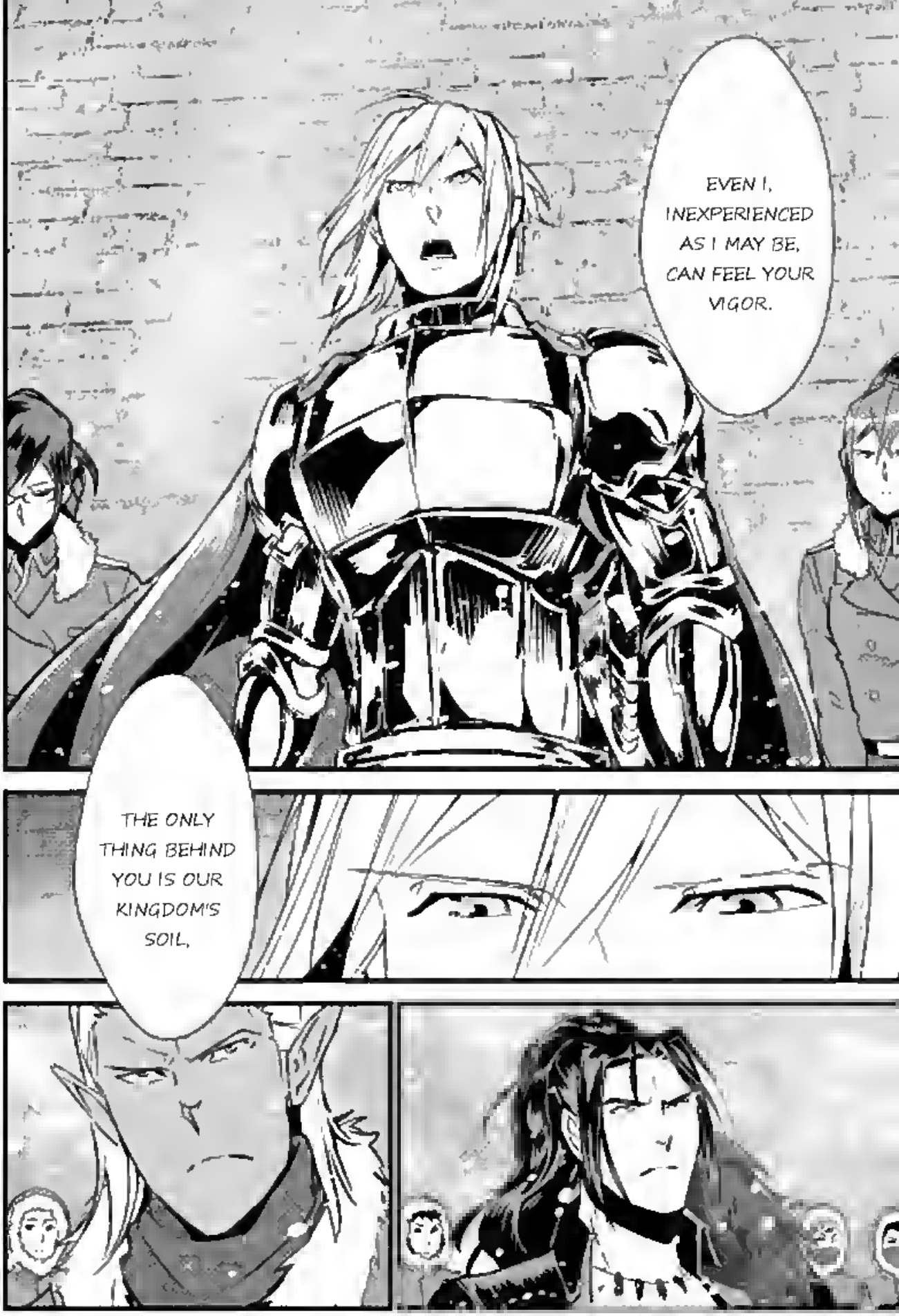
HEY! ARE YOU TRYING TO GET OUT OF IT?!
OH... I'LL DO MY BEST.

AND SO, THE NIGHT PASSED.

LECTIVAL REMEMBERED SOME UNPLEASANT THINGS AS MERIELA'S ENTHUSIASM GREW.
COME ON WE'LL HAVE A TON OF WORK AFTER ALL THE FIGHTING
DON'T WORRY, I'LL GO DEAL WITH IT WHILE YOU WORK!

YOU SOLDIERS WILL TRAVERSE THE WHITE WOLF MOUNTAINS AND ATTACK WILMAGS.
YOU'LL BE INSIDE IMPERIAL TERRITORY, WHERE OUR ARMY HASN'T SET FOOT IN THESE PAST 300 YEARS.

YOU SHALL BE TRAILBLAZERS FOR THE KINGDOM.
YOU ARE THE SOLDIERS OUR KINGDOM NEEDS IN THIS MOMENT.


EVEN I, INEXPERIENCED AS I MAY BE, CAN FEEL YOUR VIGOR.
THE ONLY THING BEHIND YOU IS OUR KINGDOM'S SOIL.

THERE IS NO PLACE FOR FEAR HERE!
.....
I HAVE BUT 1 ORDER FOR YOU:

ADVANCE AND DESTROY THE ENEMY!